

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Following entry of this amendment, claims 1-6, 8-13, 27, 28, 34, and 41-43 will be pending. Claim 1 is amended herein.

Status

In the May 12, 2004 Office Action, which is a "Final" action, claims 27, 28, 34, and 41-43 were allowed. Claims 2, 3, and 8 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten. Claims 1, 4-6, and 9-13 stand rejected.

Telephone Interview

The undersigned attorney and Examiner Matthew Landau had a telephonic interview on May 19, 2004, during which we discussed the enclosed amendments to the claims, specification, and drawings. A preliminary conclusion stated by the Examiner was that the amendment distinguishes over the admitted prior art of Fig. 5. Agreement concerning entry of the amendment was not reached, however, because the May 12, 2004, Office Action is final and the Examiner may consider it necessary to do further searching or consideration of the amendments.

Objection to Specification

The May 12, 2004, Office Action objected to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter, in particular, the phrase "an outlet area." This phrase has been deleted from the claims, so that this objection is now moot.

Claim Rejections -- 35 USC §102

The May 12, 2004, Office Action rejected claims 1, 9, 10, and 37 under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by the admitted prior art (including Figures 3-5 of the present application and U.S. Patent No. 5,870,420). Claim 37 is no longer pending, having been cancelled in a previous amendment.

Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the part of the trailing edge of the flange is located inside a cylindrical volume defined by the combined cylindrical forms of the blower sections so that the flange does not interfere with mixing of the gases discharged by adjacent blower sections. As shown in Fig. 7, part of a trailing edge 301b of the flange 301 is located

inside a cylindrical volume defined by the combined cylindrical forms of the blower sections. The left and upper portions of the cylindrical blower 203 are visible in Fig. 7 behind the trailing edge 301b of the flange 301. The discharges of the blower sections are not separated by the flange, which allows the discharged gases to intermix. Once the gas has flowed beyond the trailing edge 301b of the flange 301, it is able to mix with the gas being discharged by the adjacent blower. In Fig. 9, trailing edge 401b of flange 401 is similarly located so as to allow the discharged gases to intermix. This is in contrast to the prior art of Fig. 5, in which the trailing edge of the flange 201 is located well beyond the cylindrical volume of the blower sections, which restricts the intermixing of the discharged gases.

Accordingly, amended claim 1 should be allowed. Claims 9 and 10 are allowable for the same reasons as claim 1. The specification has been amended herein at pages 8 and 9 to provide an antecedent basis for the amended claim 1. No new matter is being entered, as the added description is based on the originally-filed drawings and specification.

Claim Rejections -- 35 USC §103

The May 12, 2004, Office Action rejected claims 4-6, 11, and 12 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over admitted prior art in view of U.S. Patent 6,195,378 (Hoffman). Claims 4-6, 11, and 12, which are dependent on claim 1, distinguish over the admitted prior art for substantially the same reasons discussed above concerning the §102 rejection of claim 1.

The May 12, 2004 Office Action rejected claim 13 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over the admitted prior art in view of U.S. Patent 6,250,886 (Immell). Claim 13 depends from claim 1, which distinguishes over the admitted prior art for the reasons set forth above.

Amendments to Specification and Drawings

Page 3 of the specification is amended herein to correct typographical errors. Pages 8 and 9 are amended as discussed above to provide an antecedent for the amendments to claim 1. No new matter is added by these amendments.

Drawing Figs. 7 and 8 are amended herein. In Fig. 7, a reference numeral has been added. In Fig. 8, corrections have been made to the relative size of the blower sections and the reference numerals for the leading and trailing edges.

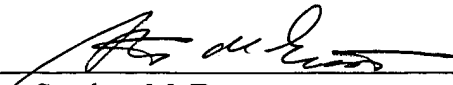
Conclusion

For the reasons discussed above, Applicant believes that the present application is now in form for allowance, and action to that end is requested. If the examiner believes that a telephone interview would be helpful, the undersigned can be reached at 415-772-4909.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: July 20, 2004

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